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RUEHTRO/AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI 0472
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SUBJECT: CHAD: NGO HEAD KILLED IN APPARENT CARJACKING

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SUMMARY

¶1. (SBU) The UN and NGO community is assessing the security environment in eastern Chad after the tragic death of a Save the Children representative in an apparent carjacking attempt on the heavily traveled Abeche-Adre corridor. With banditry rising in eastern Chad, EUFOR/MINURCAT's ability to provide what it calls a "dissuasive security umbrella" will be severely tested. In private discussions, EUFOR commanders cite NGO reticence to coordinate activities and share information (including basic information on communications and travel) as a critical obstacle to protecting humanitarian workers. The force and the humanitarian community clearly need to improve their ability to work together effectively while respecting their separate mandates. End summary.

¶2. (SBU) On May 1, UN Resident Representative and Humanitarian Coordinator Kingsley Amaning convoked the UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee (to which donor countries are invited as observers) to inform them that Save the Children Representative in Chad, Pascal Malingue had been killed in what appeared to have been a carjacking attempt. The assault took place some 20 kilometers from Farchana (where a EUFOR battalion is based), on the Abeche-Adre road, a major transportation route. Two armed men in military fatigues stopped a convoy of three vehicles (two UNICEF, one Save the Children). Occupants of the vehicles were told to get out of the cars and lie down. Malingue was the last one out. He was shot in the head with a Kalashnikov while standing with his arms up, according to witnesses.

¶3. (SBU) It is not clear if the shooting was close range and deliberate but initial reports appeared to rule out an accidental discharge. The attackers reportedly "panicked" and attempted to escape in the Save the Children vehicle. Not being able to locate the keys to this car, they took the UNICEF car and fled the scene, leaving a Kalashnikov rifle in the Save the Children car. Malingue was rushed to Farchana in a Medecins Sans Frontieres vehicle but had already expired. EUFOR used helicopters to search for the stolen vehicle without success.

¶4. (SBU) Representatives of the UN and NGO community at the meeting were clearly in shock at the horrific event. Nonetheless, it was noted that armed carjackings had been rising in recent months; perhaps it was only a matter of time before one of these would have ended tragically. Participants agreed that the Government of Chad needed to be strongly urged by the UN/NGO community and by major

country donors to take stronger measures to enforce security in the region. Despite differing views on whether a suspension of humanitarian activities to protest the lack of security was justified or not, UN and NGOs elected finally to suspend all non-essential ('life-saving' such as water, health or food-aid logistics) activities for 48 hours. The temporary suspension ended late on Saturday, May 3.

15. (SBU) Heads of UN agencies and major NGO partners met with the Prime Minister on May 3 and delivered a letter which explained the suspension and called on the government to take stronger measures to ensure security in the east. The letter noted that since January 1, 2008, there had been 31 attacks on humanitarian operations, including 3 homicides and 15 car thefts.

16. (SBU) For their part, in private discussions with misoffs, EUFOR commanders in Abeche have become increasingly frustrated with their relations with NGOs. The commanders acknowledge that EUFOR is still building up its forces and capabilities in the East. Even so, they cite NGO reticence to coordinate activities and share information (including basic information on communications and travel) as a critical obstacle to protecting humanitarian workers.

Comment:

17. (SBU) The tragedy of this happening 20 kilometers from a EUFOR military battalion was not lost on those who had attended the meeting. With banditry rising, EUFOR/MINURCAT's ability to provide what it calls a "dissuasive security umbrella" will be severely tested. In addition, EUFOR maintains that MINURCAT deployment is essential to realization of this dissuasive presence, but MINURCAT has been slower in deploying. Nonetheless, the international forces

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and the humanitarian community clearly need to improve their ability to work together effectively while respecting their separate mandates. NIGRO